General Assembly
Official Records
Sixty-ninth Session
Supplement No. 13

A/69/13

Report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

1 January-31 December 2013

United Nations • New York, 2014

Note

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

Contents

		Page
	Letter of transmittal	4
	Letter dated 17 June 2014 from the Chair of the Advisory Commission of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East addressed to the Commissioner-General of the Agency	6
Chapter		
I.	Contextual overview	9
	A. Political, economic and security developments	9
	B. Operational developments	13
	C. Organizational developments	15
	D. Legal matters	17
	E. Financial overview	23
II.	Field priorities	26
	A. Jordan	26
	B. Lebanon	26
	C. Syrian Arab Republic	26
	D. West Bank	27
	E. Gaza Strip	27
III.	Subprogramme review presented within the framework of the UNRWA human development goals	29
	A. Goal 1. A long and healthy life	29
	B. Goal 2. Acquired knowledge and skills	31
	C. Goal 3. A decent standard of living	33
	D. Goal 4. Human rights enjoyed to the fullest	36

Letter of transmittal

25 August 2014

I have the honour to submit to the General Assembly the annual report on the work of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) for 2013. The report is submitted in compliance with the request contained in paragraph 21 of resolution 302 (IV) of 8 December 1949 and with paragraph 8 of resolution 1315 (XIII) of 12 December 1958.

As in previous years, the report describes political, economic, security and operational developments in UNRWA fields of activities in the Syrian Arab Republic, Lebanon, Jordan and the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as significant legal matters, progress in programme reforms, the Agency's financial situation and priorities for the coming year. The report also presents a review of progress towards human development goals, as set out in the Agency's medium-term strategy for 2010-2015.

The Advisory Commission of UNRWA, comprising 25 Member States and 3 observers, endorsed a draft of this report prior to its June 2014 session, and a letter, addressed to me from the Chair of the Commission, is contained in this report. The ongoing engagement and constructive advice of the Commission continues to be essential to UNRWA. In accordance with the usual practice, a draft of the report has also been shared with representatives of the Government of Israel.

This is my first report to the General Assembly since beginning my tenure as Commissioner-General in April 2014, and I take this opportunity to provide an update on developments in the UNRWA area of operations over the past months.

At the time of submitting this report, the dramatic escalation of the conflict in the Gaza Strip and Israel since 8 July 2014 is ongoing. It has caused immense human suffering and devastation. The numbers of civilian fatalities, injuries and displacement are unprecedented in recent years, and the scale of the destruction of homes and other civilian infrastructure in the Gaza Strip is deeply alarming. UNRWA facilities, several of which were sheltering civilians displaced as a result of the hostilities, with full knowledge of the parties to the hostilities, have been hit on multiple occasions. I repeat my call for a thorough investigation into these serious incidents, which resulted in serious loss of life and injuries. I also reiterate my condemnation in the strongest possible terms of all violations of international law, including with regard to the inviolability of United Nations premises, and the storing of weapons by armed groups in UNRWA schools.

A comprehensive agreement is needed to address the underlying causes of this escalation, and it is clear that there can be no return to the pre-existing conditions under the blockade. The illegal Israeli blockade of the Gaza Strip, restricting the exit and entry of goods and persons, which has crippled the economy and has had a

severe impact on the health and living conditions of Palestine refugees, must be lifted.

In the West Bank, Palestine refugees' lives are becoming increasingly unpredictable and insecure, as the worrying trends of increasing violence, particularly in recent months, including increasing use of live ammunition by Israeli security forces, and an increasing number of incursions by the Israeli security forces into Palestine refugee camps, continued into 2014. Israeli settlement construction, settler violence, home demolitions, arrests, detention and forced displacement have also continued to affect Palestinians across the West Bank, including Palestine refugees. The regime of movement restrictions, settlement expansion and the barrier have made life increasingly untenable for the Palestinian people.

The conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic has continued to claim the lives of Palestine refugees, and to injure and displace many more. UNRWA provided direct assistance to Palestine refugees inside the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as to those who have fled to Lebanon and Jordan. In 2014, UNRWA delivered vital assistance to Palestine refugees inside the Syrian Arab Republic, including food assistance to almost 100,000 families, as well as maintaining core services to the greatest extent possible. In Jordan and Lebanon, UNRWA provided cash assistance for food and other items to Palestine refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as ensuring access to the Agency's health clinics and schools. I repeat my call for safe, uninterrupted and substantial humanitarian access in the Syrian Arab Republic, and for all parties to the conflict to respect human life and the neutrality and inviolability of UNRWA facilities.

Lebanon and Jordan have been generous in offering sanctuary to over 1 million civilians fleeing the Syrian Arab Republic, despite the substantial burden this has placed on them. It is vital that the fundamental principle of non-refoulement be honoured with regard to Palestine refugees fleeing the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic and that they are not discriminated against, in accordance with international law. It is also vital that the international community continue to provide support to both countries.

The UNRWA response to the crises in the Gaza Strip and in the Syrian Arab Republic would not be possible without the dedication and bravery of UNRWA staff, who have shown extraordinary courage in continuing to work in extremely difficult circumstances. I take this opportunity to honour fallen colleagues in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank and the Syrian Arab Republic, and to commend all UNRWA staff for their work and for their commitment to Palestine refugees.

From my visits to all UNRWA areas of operations, it is evident that the situation facing Palestine refugees across the region is completely unsustainable. With the current escalation of violence in the occupied Palestinian territory, the suspension of Israeli-Palestinian peace talks and the increasing hardship facing Palestine refugees in the Syrian Arab Republic, the international community must reaffirm its commitment to Palestine refugees, until there is a just and lasting solution to their plight.

(*Signed*) Pierre **Krähenbühl**
Commissioner-General

Letter dated 17 June 2014 from the Chair of the Advisory Commission of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East addressed to the Commissioner-General of the Agency

At its regular session held in Amman on 16 and 17 June 2014, the Advisory Commission of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) considered your draft annual report on UNRWA activities and operations, covering the period from 1 January 2013 to 31 December 2013, to be submitted to the General Assembly at its forthcoming sixty-ninth session.

The Commission commends UNRWA for its efforts to continue delivering services to Palestine refugees and underscores the vital role of UNRWA in contributing to regional stability until a just solution is reached, in accordance with relevant United Nations resolutions (General Assembly resolutions 194 (III) and 302 (IV)). The Commission expresses its utmost appreciation to Filippo Grandi for his significant contribution to strengthening UNRWA during his tenure with the Agency including as Commissioner-General from January 2010 to March 2014, and welcomes you as the new Commissioner-General following your appointment on 30 March 2014. The Commission will continue to support you in implementing the work of the Agency.

The Commission is concerned that during 2013 conflict continued to affect both the lives of Palestine refugees and the ability of the Agency to serve their needs. In this context, the Commission recognizes the ongoing vulnerability of Palestine refugees, who have been affected by displacement for over six decades.

The Commission is alarmed by the severe worsening of the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic during 2013 as a result of ongoing conflict, and notes that the Palestine refugee community, numbering 540,000 as at December 2013, has been affected by death, injury, the destruction of homes and businesses and/or displacement across the country and region, including by armed clashes in many of the Palestinian refugee camps. The Commission deplores the death of five UNRWA staff members in the Syrian Arab Republic as a result of the conflict in 2013, and expresses its condolences to their families, friends and colleagues.

The Commission commends the UNRWA field staff in the Syrian Arab Republic for concretely supporting the resilience of Palestine refugees in the Syrian Arab Republic by ensuring the continuity, to the extent possible, of UNRWA education, health, relief and other services alongside a robust humanitarian response in coordination with the concerned authorities, as noted in the report of the Commissioner-General, chapter I-A, paragraph 3. The Commission notes with grave concern the restrictions on humanitarian access to many camps and other refugee communities. Much more needs to be done by all parties to guarantee safe, unimpeded, and full humanitarian access to all areas where Palestine refugees reside across the Syrian Arab Republic. The critical issue of detention of UNRWA staff and Palestine refugees must also be addressed. In addition, the Commission expresses appreciation to donors who have contributed generously to the Agency's humanitarian appeal for the Syrian Arab Republic, and urges continuing support in that regard so long as conditions on the ground require it.

The Commission recognizes that the arrival of Palestine refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic has resulted in additional strain on neighbouring host countries and appreciates the generosity of those who have offered refuge to this vulnerable population. UNRWA estimates that approximately 80,000 Palestine refugees in the Syrian Arab Republic have been externally displaced since the start of the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic.

The Commission notes the continued efforts of the Agency to address the needs of Palestine refugees in Lebanon. It stresses the need for sustained efforts to help the refugees improve their living conditions based on rights they enjoy as refugees, and commends UNRWA for its response to address the needs of more than 52,000 Palestine refugees recorded with UNRWA who have fled from the Syrian Arab Republic.

The Commission is further concerned about the ongoing restrictions on the movement of goods and persons into and out of the Gaza Strip imposed by the Government of Israel, further devastating Gaza's trade-oriented economy, and deepening its dependence on aid. The tightening of restrictions on the import of construction materials in late 2013 has increased delays faced by UNRWA, and increased costs, in implementing vital projects, including housing, clinics and schools.

The Commission also notes the further deterioration of the humanitarian situation during 2013 in the Gaza Strip caused by the reduction in access to basic commodities, including fuel.

The Commission is very concerned that the forced displacement, demolitions and destruction of homes and economic assets, the separation barrier, the closure and other restrictions on movement, imposed by the Israeli authorities in the West Bank, including those in East Jerusalem, continued to have a profound effect on the living conditions of Palestine refugees. The Commission notes that sustained restrictions on the movement of people and goods continue to obstruct economic growth, leading to high rates of unemployment, poverty and food insecurity, with serious implications for the well-being of Palestine refugees. Furthermore, the Commission deplores the sharp increase in violence, including the use of lethal force in the West Bank in 2013, which resulted in the deaths of 17 refugees, including the killing of an UNRWA staff member by Israeli military forces in Kalandia refugee camp in August 2013. We also express serious concerns about their violation of the immunity of UNRWA premises in the West Bank on at least 48 occasions during 2013. The Commission asks all parties to refrain from violating the neutrality of UNRWA installations.

The Commission remains concerned about the level of threats and attacks against UNRWA personnel in conflict areas, in particular threats to and attacks on locally recruited staff while delivering services.

The Commission calls for the removal of all Israeli restrictions regarding the movement of UNRWA staff and goods in line with the November 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access concluded between the Government of Israel and the Palestinian Authority, and the 1967 Comay-Michelmore agreement between UNRWA and the Government of Israel.

The Commission calls on all parties fully to respect United Nations resolutions and international law, including international humanitarian law. The Commission

remains extremely concerned about the lack of Agency access to, and information on, its staff detained by relevant authorities, and reminds these authorities of their obligations with reference to General Assembly resolution 36/232.

The Commission notes and remains concerned about the continuing decline in the Agency's annual emergency appeal revenue for the West Bank and Gaza and for assistance for the displaced of Nahr el-Bared. The Commission urges all donors to fulfil outstanding pledges for the reconstruction of Nahr el-Bared in order to allow displaced residents the opportunity to return to their homes and livelihoods as soon as possible.

The Commission is concerned about the increasing demands on UNRWA in Jordan, and stresses the need to ensure that adequate services, in scope and quality, are delivered to the refugees, in order to maintain stability.

The Commission remains concerned about persisting funding shortfalls, in particular for the UNRWA General Fund, which undermine the Agency efforts to promote human development and meet refugees' needs. The Commission recognizes the successful resource mobilization efforts of the Agency, which in 2013 brought about increased predictability of contributions to the General Fund, higher contributions from non-traditional donors and private sources, an increased share of contribution to the General Fund from Arab countries, and consequently further evidence of diversification in funding sources. The Commission similarly appreciates the long-term support of major donors, and the renewed efforts of members of the League of Arab States to cover 7.8 per cent of the General Fund. The Commission notes however, that while in 2013 the Agency recorded the highest level of resource mobilization, the medium-to-long-term funding concerns of UNRWA must continue to be addressed.

The Commission commends UNRWA for the progress made in reforms of its programmes in health and education, and improved effectiveness in delivering services to refugees in cooperation with host countries, and urges UNRWA to continue the dialogue with stakeholders in the planning and implementation of these reforms, to ensure accountability, and to continue to incorporate greater efficiencies in programming.

The Commission supports UNRWA in the preparation of its medium-term strategy for 2016-2021, and welcomes the progress made.

The Commission highly commends the support by host countries and host authorities, and donors, for the work and activities of UNRWA.

(*Signed*) Hassan **Mneymneh**
Chair of the Advisory Commission

Chapter I
Contextual overview

A. Political, economic and security developments

1. During 2013, for the third consecutive year, recurring conflict, and the consequences thereof, continued to affect all five fields of operation of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). To a varying degree across the Agency's fields of operation, impediments inhibited Palestine refugees from enjoying their rights under international law. Against an increasingly difficult regional environment, Palestine refugees have also been affected by the persistent funding shortfalls of UNRWA, which have undermined the efforts of the Agency to promote human development and meet humanitarian needs. These trends serve to underline the ongoing vulnerability of a refugee population that has suffered the effects of over six decades of displacement, and whose plight can only be fully resolved by a just and durable solution, in accordance with international law and relevant United Nations resolutions.

2. The humanitarian crisis in the Syrian Arab Republic continued to worsen during the reporting period, as a result of the ongoing armed conflict, which has increasingly affected the 540,000 Palestine refugees registered with UNRWA in the country as at December 2013. During 2013, five UNRWA staff members were killed and eight were injured in violence related to the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic. Many Palestine refugees continued to maintain a position of neutrality. However, during the reporting period, a significant number of Palestine refugee camps and neighbourhoods were engulfed by armed clashes, many involving the use of heavy weapons. Almost the entire refugee community was affected by conflict-related deaths, destruction and displacement across the country. The Agency repeatedly called on all parties to the conflict to abide by their obligations under international law. Many Palestine refugees have been killed or seriously injured during the conflict in Syria, including in incidents that affected UNRWA installations. Verified figures on the total number of Palestine refugee casualties during the reporting period are not available. Throughout 2013 the siege of Yarmouk, which raises serious concerns under international law,[1] continued to inflict intense suffering and deprivation on the civilian population, with regular reports of casualties as a result of shelling and other armed violence. Widespread malnutrition, hunger and lack of food, medicines and other essential commodities, utilities and services emerged as a significant concern in the latter part of 2013. Despite calls by the international community for humanitarian access, notably in the Security Council presidential statement of 2 October 2013 (S/PRST/2013/15), UNRWA access to Yarmouk was not possible during the reporting period. The Agency estimates that by 31 December 2013, approximately 340,000 Palestine refugees had left their homes to seek safety either elsewhere in the Syrian Arab Republic (approximately 270,000), Lebanon (approximately 51,000), Jordan (approximately 10,000) or further afield (approximately 10,000).

[1] See press release and note of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, issued 19 February 2014, available from http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=14262&LangID=E.

3. Owing to conflict, access to food and other essential commodities became increasingly difficult in many areas of Damascus, Dar'a and Aleppo governorates. Palestine refugees directly experienced conflict-related trauma, threats to their physical safety and displacement from their homes, while also contending with an increased incidence of violent crimes, including kidnapping. The Syrian authorities, including the General Administration for Palestinian Arab Refugees, continued to express support for Palestine refugees and to facilitate the work of UNRWA. For example, to help compensate for the lack of access to UNRWA schools, the Ministry of Education granted UNRWA and Palestine refugees the use of government schools in safe areas. However, the intense and pervasive nature of the conflict, and the actions of the parties to it, seriously affected the Agency operations. Agency schools, clinics and other facilities were damaged or inaccessible during armed engagements. UNRWA school buildings and the Damascus Training Centre of the Agency continued to serve as temporary accommodation for Syrians and Palestine refugees.

4. The prices of food and other essential commodities in the Syrian Arab Republic rose sharply throughout 2013, placing them out of reach for the thousands of Palestine refugees who, relative to Syrians, were already suffering from higher rates of poverty and deprivation prior to the conflict. As the Syrian economy further contracted, unemployment, including among Palestine refugees, deepened. Displaced families were forced to rent expensive private accommodation, further depleting their scarce resources. Palestine refugees, like Syrians, were affected by shortages of electricity, fuel and heating oil. UNRWA estimated that by the end of 2013, 440,000 Palestine refugees required humanitarian assistance to meet their daily needs.

5. Events in the Syrian Arab Republic continued to have significant implications for the operations of the Agency in Jordan and Lebanon.

6. During 2013, Palestine refugees in Lebanon, of whom 447,328 are registered with UNRWA, continued to face acute socioeconomic deprivation and barriers to fully enjoying a broad range of human rights, against the backdrop of an unstable political and security situation. UNRWA continued to advocate for Palestine refugees' right to work in Lebanon. Some improvements were made in 2013, making the process for eligible Palestine refugees to obtain work permits slightly less cumbersome. However, Palestine refugees' right to work remained highly restricted. On 22 March 2013, Prime Minister Najib Mikati resigned, and the cabinet remained in caretaker capacity throughout the year. Tripoli experienced an increase in armed clashes between groups linked to the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic. The clashes directly impacted on the Agency operations, causing its installations to close on a number of occasions, and affecting access to two Palestine refugee camps in northern Lebanon. Six vehicle-borne improvised explosive device attacks took place in 2013, most of which targeted the southern suburbs of Beirut. While Lebanon has opened its borders to large numbers of refugees fleeing the Syrian conflict, since August 2013 a number of Palestine refugees have been denied entry. UNRWA deployed staff at the Masnaa border crossing to monitor and assist Palestine refugees crossing to Lebanon.

7. Of the five UNRWA fields of operations, Jordan hosts the greatest number of Palestine refugees, with 2.1 million as at December 2013. While Jordan remains stable within an increasingly insecure region, the global economic downturn and the

armed conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic have generated challenges. A new cabinet was sworn in during August, and a new senate was formed in October. The Government of Jordan has expressed concern about the pressure placed on the national resources and infrastructure by the continuing arrival of refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic, which has affected food prices and rents. Unemployment, especially of youth, remained high, and fuel prices and electricity tariffs increased substantially during the reporting period, as subsidies had been reduced.

8. In 2013, the situation in occupied Palestinian territory continued to be characterized by political impasse, conflict and restrictions on rights and opportunities for Palestinians, including refugees. The situation also affected the 1.9 million registered Palestine refugees in the State of Palestine.

9. There were no significant positive developments regarding the blockade imposed on Gaza by the Government of Israel following the Hamas takeover in mid-2007. Throughout 2013, exports and movement of people to and from the Gaza Strip remained effectively banned, and access to fishing areas and agricultural land continued to be severely limited. The blockade has destroyed the previously dynamic trade-oriented economy of Gaza and its capacity to create jobs and pushed the vast majority of the population into poverty and aid dependency.[2] The second half of 2013 saw a rapid and severe deterioration of the humanitarian situation. The halt of the tunnel trade with Egypt — a lifeline given the blockade — led to an electricity, fuel and food crisis, which was further compounded by the temporary suspension of construction material imports for approved United Nations projects through Kerem Shalom in October 2013 and the continued Israeli ban on construction material imports for the private sector. The Israeli authorities announced those measures on 13 October 2013, following the discovery of a tunnel, reinforced by concrete, leading from Gaza into Israel, reportedly built by Palestinian militants. The registered Palestine refugee population in Gaza stood at 1,240,000 as at 31 December 2013. By the end of 2013, the unemployment rate among refugees in Gaza was 40.9 per cent. Unemployment trends are largely driven by job losses in the construction sector, which was responsible for half of all new jobs in 2012.[3] In the third quarter of 2013, UNRWA construction projects generated over 5,000 full-time jobs; however, activities halted in November following the suspension of imports of construction material. As at 31 December 2013, 6 projects, valued at $52 million, out of a total of 30, were allowed to resume implementation; 24 previously approved projects worth almost $64 million were awaiting coordination to resume; and 38 projects worth over $111 million were pending the approval of the Coordination of Government Activities in the Territories Unit. No new projects have been approved since March 2013. The closure of tunnels between Gaza and Egypt also resulted in significant inflation in the price of fuel and staple foods, further reducing households' purchasing power and increasing reliance on UNRWA. Food insecurity increased to 57 per cent in 2012, prior to the closure of tunnels. At the

[2] Despite the installation of a new scanner which would allow for a comprehensive check of all goods exiting Gaza at Kerem Shalom, the only functioning border crossing with Israel, during 2013, only 23 truckloads exited Gaza to the West Bank and 160 truckloads were exported from Gaza to other countries. This is equal to 75 per cent of the truckloads that exited Gaza per week before June 2007 (250 truckloads per week) and a 28 per cent decrease compared to 2012 (254 truckloads).

[3] The construction sector was highly dependent on tunnel trade, as private sector construction material imports continue to be banned by Israel, and UNRWA construction projects.

end of the reporting period, approximately 800,000 people — almost half the population of the Gaza Strip — were receiving quarterly food aid from UNRWA. Following the release of the *Gaza in 2020* report,[4] UNRWA issued the "Gaza in 2020 — UNRWA Operational Response" report.[5] By the year 2020, the Palestine refugee population in heavily urbanized and densely populated Gaza is expected to increase to approximately 1.6 million. Electricity provision will at least need to double to meet demand, Gaza may be effectively without access to potable water, and expanded health services, additional schools and employment opportunities will be necessary for an overwhelmingly young population. Ending the Israeli-imposed ban on exports is crucial for any sustainable economic recovery and reducing aid dependency.

10. As at 31 December 2013, the registered Palestine refugee population in the West Bank stood at 754,411. During the reporting period there was a significant increase in incursions and search operations carried out by Israeli security forces in Palestine refugee camps in the West Bank. A sharp increase in the use of live ammunition by Israeli security forces was also observed and, as a result, an increase in injuries and fatalities, while the Government of Israel has reported a corresponding increase in armed incidents involving Palestinians. On 26 August 2013, Israeli security forces shot and killed an UNRWA staff member, and injured a second staff member at Kalandia refugee camp during a search and arrest operation. The UNRWA investigation concluded that both staff members were shot while unarmed and not posing any threat to life at any time. At the end of the reporting period the Israeli investigation was ongoing. Of the 27 Palestinians killed by Israeli security forces in the West Bank, 17 were Palestine refugees; while in 2012 no refugees were killed. At least 486 Palestine refugees were injured by Israeli security forces in camps during the reporting period, representing an almost thirteenfold increase over 2012. In addition, at least 663 Palestinian-owned structures were demolished by the Israeli authorities owing to a lack of Israeli building permits, which are difficult for Palestinians to obtain.[6] Close to one quarter of the demolished structures belonged to registered Palestine refugees. The vast majority of demolitions (85 per cent) took place in Area C. A total of 1,103 Palestinians were displaced during 2013, with Palestine refugees accounting for 34 per cent of those displaced. Of the refugees displaced, over half were children. Socioeconomic conditions deteriorated in 2013, owing to high unemployment and contracting purchasing power, and the ongoing regime of movement restrictions imposed by Israeli authorities. The political situation was negatively affected by a widespread lack of confidence in the ongoing peace negotiations, as well as the Palestinian political divide. Palestine refugees continue to be among the most vulnerable Palestinians in the West Bank. The ongoing construction of the barrier, restrictions on movement and access and forced displacement are among the factors hampering the economic development of the West Bank and contributing to high rates of unemployment and food insecurity among Palestine refugees.

---

[4] United Nations country team, "Gaza in 2020: a livable place?" (Jerusalem Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process (UNSCO), August 2012).

[5] UNRWA (2013), "Gaza in 2020: UNRWA Operational Response", available from http://www.unrwa.org/userfiles/2013070364659.pdf.

[6] See A/HRC/24/30, para. 35, and A/HRC/25/38, para. 11.

B. Operational developments

11. Across its fields of operation in 2013, UNRWA continued to provide assistance and protection to Palestine refugees through the provision of education, health, relief, social services, infrastructure and camp improvement, and microfinance. In addition, UNRWA continued providing humanitarian assistance to Palestine refugees affected by emergencies and to persons displaced by the 1967 and subsequent hostilities, in accordance with its mandate. The scale of the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic and its devastating humanitarian consequences for Palestine refugees continued to outstrip forecasts and planning scenarios. The 2013 UNRWA crisis response appeal appealed for critical support to fund its emergency food, cash, non-food items, education and health programmes. One feature of this effort was innovative partnerships with the private sector to enable UNRWA to reach 364,597 Palestine refugees with cash assistance. The total amount required for the year was $290.8 million, and many donors responded generously, funding 72 per cent of the appeal through 31 December 2013. Since 2000, the Agency has been engaged in a large-scale emergency intervention in the occupied Palestinian territory, and during the reporting period the Agency continued to provide basic humanitarian assistance under an emergency appeal for $300 million. By the end of the year, donors had funded $136.2 million, 45.4 per cent, of the appeal.

12. In the Syrian Arab Republic, the spread of armed conflict and its humanitarian consequences triggered a large escalation in demand for UNRWA services. Many more Palestine refugees who had previously been self-reliant found themselves relying on UNRWA for essential support, while aid dependency deepened among those already living in hardship. The framework of the Agency response was the Syria Humanitarian Assistance Response Plan, prepared by the United Nations in coordination with the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic. UNRWA activities in 2013 included the provision of cash to 364,597 beneficiaries and food to at least 334,969 beneficiaries; the provision of temporary accommodation to over 13,000 beneficiaries in 30 UNRWA and non-UNRWA facilities, the provision of non-food items; arrangements to ensure access to hospital services for Palestine refugees; and measures to enhance the safety of staff involved in humanitarian operations. In spite of the considerable risks, UNRWA field staff ensured the continuity of its operations and accomplished many of the objectives of the Plan. However, services in Yarmouk, where over 160,000 Palestine refugees had previously resided, were halted following access restrictions in July. In 2013, other Palestine refugee camps and communities suffering access restrictions during the reporting period included Dar'a, Ein El Tal, Sbeineh, Qabr Seit, Husseiniyeh, Jobar, Douma, Qaboun and Khan Eshieh.

13. During 2013, an increasing number of Palestine refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic sought safe haven in Lebanon. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the number of Syrians fleeing to Lebanon rose from 130,000 in January 2013 to 858,641 by the end of the reporting period. The number of Palestine refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic approaching UNRWA for assistance in Lebanon rose from 17,000 in January 2013 to 51,000 in December 2013. In response, UNRWA has bolstered its emergency staff and set up structured coordination mechanisms. All Palestine refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic have immediate access to UNRWA schools, health clinics and hospitalization through referrals. UNRWA launched a new initiative in October to

provide beneficiaries with ATM cards that would replace the cash-in-hand distributions initiated in December 2012. The new card system gives beneficiaries more dignity and minimizes security risks and overhead costs. Owing to insufficient funding, UNRWA was forced to eliminate the additional emergency relief services provided to displaced families from Nahr el-Bared during the reporting period. Following the announcement of this change in the second half of 2013, various UNRWA installations in northern Lebanon were closed by protestors, and a protest tent blocked the entrance of the Lebanon Field Office compound for three months.

14. During the reporting period, 10,912 Palestinian refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic were recorded in Jordan. In January 2013, the Government of Jordan announced a policy of non-admission of Palestinians fleeing the Syrian Arab Republic. In line with the Security Council presidential statement of 2 October 2013, UNRWA continues to urge the Government of Jordan to grant temporary access and protection to Palestinians fleeing the Syrian Arab Republic, and to appeal to the international community to increase its assistance to Jordan. UNRWA is particularly concerned by the forcible return of Palestine refugee families to Syria. In 2013, the Agency documented 74 such cases, including 34 minors. Women and children comprised 67 per cent of those deported. By the end of the reporting period, donors had funded $4.82 million of UNRWA appeals in 2013 for assistance to Palestine refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic who have entered Jordan. Ongoing or planned activities to improve aid effectiveness include a multi-sector needs assessment, development of targeting framework and the shift to ATM-based cash transfers.

15. In Gaza, UNRWA remained the key service provider to over 1.3 million registered persons out of a population of 1.7 million.[7] As part of UNRWA efforts to ensure needs-based aid provision, the Agency continued its comprehensive poverty assessment in Gaza, which aimed at linking food rations to families' poverty status more effectively. Owing to the severe deterioration of the operating environment and community perceptions of decreasing assistance, the continued implementation of the poverty survey has faced challenges. Concerns remain over the ability of the Agency to continue regular food aid provision throughout 2014. In June, owing to resource constraints, UNRWA suspended its school feeding programme, which had guaranteed children at least one meal per day. During the reporting period, additional staffing, transit and logistical costs resulting from Israeli security approval requirements on access and monitoring of construction material imported through the Kerem Shalom amounted to over $6.7 million, over 1 per cent of the UNRWA General Fund. Additional requirements imposed in December 2013, such as the daily monitoring of cement factories by international staff, increased the financial burden on the Agency. The cash-for-work programme expanded by almost 50 per cent to 17,053 short-term job opportunities in 2013, and the share of impoverished beneficiaries increased to 79 per cent. The Graduate Training Programme, a subcomponent of the cash-for-work programme, provided a first short-term job opportunity for 947 top university graduates.

16. UNRWA operations in the West Bank continued to face financial constraints, particularly for humanitarian assistance. In 2013, the Emergency Appeal budget reduced from $41 million in 2012 to $38 million. UNRWA continued to work in

[7] Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (2013), *Population*, available from http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/site/881/default.aspx#Population.

partnership with the World Food Programme to distribute food parcels to vulnerable West Bank Bedouin refugee communities. The announcement of reduction in cash-for-work opportunities outside camps met with protests by refugees. In response to growing protection concerns, the Agency assisted 2,172 refugees directly affected by demolitions or Israeli security forces operations during the reporting period. Operations in the West Bank were disrupted when the UNRWA West Bank Area Staff Union initiated a strike on 3 December 2013 that continued for the remainder of the reporting period. The strike resulted in the stoppage of virtually all Agency operations and the closure of UNRWA installations.

17. During the reporting period, five staff members were killed in the Syrian Arab Republic and one in the West Bank, and a total of eight staff members were injured in the Syrian Arab Republic and one was injured in the West Bank. The overall security of UNRWA staff remained of serious concern, including threats and attacks by beneficiaries on locally recruited staff while delivering services. The Agency is exploring ways to prevent and respond to attacks, in cooperation with host authorities, consistent with United Nations privileges and immunities. UNRWA is indebted to its staff and acknowledges their dedication and loyalty and the need to take further steps to address their security. Those working in areas of conflict are commended in particular. The Agency notes with regret that the local employees of UNRWA are the only United Nations staff members in the area who do not receive hazard pay, and reiterates its calls for that issue to be addressed.

C. Organizational developments

18. During 2013, further progress was made in implementing comprehensive programme reforms, which aimed at improving medium-term planning, resource mobilization and accountability, and the quality and effectiveness of services provided to Palestine refugees.

19. Reforms included the Family Health Team approach and e-Health (an electronic medical records system), and improved the identification and referral of cases of gender-based violence. UNRWA additionally undertook a number of evaluations to improve the quality and prioritization of service provision, including studies of learning achievement (monitoring learning achievements), school dropout and of hospitalization services.

20. UNRWA continued to implement new online microfinance banking software, which streamlines and modernizes the management of clients' accounts, as well as credit operations, accounts and financial management. This was completed in the West Bank and Jordan during the reporting period, and will be finalized in Gaza and the Syrian Arab Republic in 2014. UNRWA also built and tested a new software system that will automate operations, including accounting and procurement, and lead to efficiencies through improvements in control and analysis of costs.

21. In line with best institutional practices and to improve and broaden its services to Palestine refugees and other communities, and further to Microfinance Advisory Board recommendations, the Microfinance Programme continued to update plans for the development of the programme, and to identify and address relevant political, legal, financial and other considerations necessary prior to any spin-off of the programme into a separate microfinance institution operating in Palestine, Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic. The spin-off and transformation of the programme

aims to generate programme growth and diversification for decades to come and enable it to reach a much greater number of Palestine refugees, thereby enshrining the UNRWA vision of microfinance as a way to economically empower Palestine refugees.

22. During the reporting period, UNRWA implemented policies, procedures and systems to improve management of installations, human resources and staff performance; and increased staff capability in ethics. The Department of Internal Oversight maintained activities to improve internal controls, accountability mechanisms and organizational efficiency and effectiveness. Additionally, the Ethics Office piloted and launched a comprehensive ethics e-learning course, administered the Agency's participation in the United Nations financial disclosure programme and its equivalent for area staff, and continued to coordinate and monitor the implementation of the Agency's protection against retaliation, and prohibited conduct and sexual exploitation and abuse policies. However, across fields and departments, resource constraints have impacted efficient procurement, recruitment and staff capacity, and have delayed the full implementation of some reforms, adversely affecting efforts to improve service provision to Palestine refugees.

23. During the reporting period, UNRWA made considerable progress in implementing its protection policy framework adopted in 2012, and enhancing Agency-wide understandings of protection. Staff at the UNRWA headquarters and field levels undertook protection training, including induction courses, workshops and international law training developed and delivered by the Agency. UNRWA developed field-specific protection and intervention strategies, within the overarching Agency protection framework. UNRWA also sustained its communications outreach, securing 56,238 mentions in the Arabic and English language media, and 1,083 positive mentions in Arabic and international media, in recognition of the support of donors for the refugees. Advocacy focused on the plight of Palestine refugees caught up in the Syrian conflict and the situation of Palestine refugees fleeing the conflict to neighbouring countries, including Jordan, the impact of the ongoing blockade of Gaza, forced displacement and increased use of lethal force in the West Bank, and the right to work in Lebanon.

24. UNRWA continued to implement policies to improve access to health services for HIV-affected people, persons with disabilities, the elderly and female-headed households. All guidelines issued on design of facilities and shelter and camp improvement during the reporting period were gender sensitive and included detailed standards on accessibility for persons with disabilities and the elderly. UNRWA engaged women and youth as target focus groups, as part of the design and implementation of camp improvement projects. During the reporting period, the Agency consolidated the gender task force, built on staff capacity across fields and programmes, and continued to institutionalize its gender mainstreaming strategy. Internally, new initiatives have begun to strengthen Area staff leadership, with a particular focus on supporting and improving opportunities for women within the Agency.

25. During the reporting period, the predictability of General Fund income increased, with increasing contributions from non-traditional donors and private partners in 2013. Traditional donors' share of the total General Fund decreased, while General Fund contributions from diversified sources increased from $76.6 million in 2012 to $88.2 million in 2013. Arab partners accounted for a share of the General

Fund increase — increasing 4.53 per cent in 2012, to 6.60 per cent, or $39.7 million in 2013 — mainly through contributions to projects in the occupied Palestinian territory. However, General Fund contributions from emerging markets decreased during 2013.

26. UNRWA, in its resource mobilization strategy, recognizes that, in order to meet its resource mobilization targets, it must continue to develop and maintain an enabling environment to support the management of donor relations through staff capacity-building and further harmonization of its external and internal communications structures and systems. The Agency also appointed Mohammed Assaf as its first Regional Youth Ambassador for Palestine Refugees.

27. UNRWA launched the process of developing its medium-term strategy for 2016-2021. To this end, it conducted several internal and external workshops, and launched numerous programme reviews and evaluations. A medium-term strategy "outline" and "blueprint" were welcomed by the Advisory Commission at its June and November meetings, respectively. Development of the strategy will continue in 2014.

D. Legal matters

Agency staff

28. Israeli authorities, raising security concerns, continued to restrict the freedom of movement of UNRWA personnel in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem. The restrictions included closures of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip; prohibition of local staff travelling in United Nations vehicles across the Erez crossing or the Allenby Bridge, or from driving in Israel and East Jerusalem; and time-consuming and cumbersome procedures for obtaining permits for local staff to enter Israel and East Jerusalem. On many occasions, permits were not granted even though the procedures were followed. On average, permits to enter East Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank were not issued to 14.5 per cent (102 individuals) of the Agency personnel, who needed them, and in many cases no reasons were given for the denials.

29. At the Allenby Bridge, Israeli procedures continued to request searches of United Nations vehicles that would have violated the immunity of the United Nations, unless an occupant held an identification card issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Israel. The procedures restricted in particular the movement of international staff based at UNRWA headquarters in Amman, to whom the Ministry does not issue such cards.

30. The Israeli procedures at the Erez crossing remained time-consuming, with average wait times of over 40 minutes on the Gaza Strip side and over 30 minutes on the Israeli side of the crossing. Prolonged wait times endanger the safety of international and area staff members and restrict UNRWA access at the crossing. Israeli procedures continued to request that United Nations vehicles be submitted to a search that would have violated the immunity of the United Nations, unless the vehicle included a United Nations staff member holding a diplomatic visa or was driven by an international staff member on a limited list approved by the Israeli authorities and updated during the reporting period. Opening hours at the Erez crossing remain restricted to 0800 hours to 1530 hours from the Israeli side and

0930 hours to 1500 hours from the Gaza side of the crossing. No United Nations vehicles were permitted to leave or enter the Gaza Strip between 1500 hours on Thursday and 0800 hours on Sunday. On 66 occasions at checkpoints entering East Jerusalem, Israeli authorities refused to permit UNRWA staff members in United Nations vehicles to cross without a vehicle search that would have violated the immunity of the United Nations.

31. The above-mentioned restrictions are inconsistent with the Charter of the United Nations, the 1946 Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations, relevant United Nations resolutions and the 1967 Comay-Michelmore Agreement, by which the Government of Israel is obligated to facilitate the task of UNRWA to the best of its ability, subject only to regulations or arrangements that may be necessitated by considerations of military security.

32. UNRWA applied for permits for local staff to enter East Jerusalem for operational and humanitarian reasons only and without prejudice to relevant United Nations resolutions, including resolutions relating to the status of Jerusalem.

33. Israeli authorities maintained that the restrictions were necessary to protect Israel against terrorist threats. Some information was made available to the Agency by the Israeli authorities; however, there was no evidence available to indicate that many of the above restrictions concerning Agency staff and movement were anything other than matters of administrative convenience.

34. In the West Bank, coordination with Israeli military liaison officers continued. However, the officers had limited or no influence over Israeli checkpoints staffed by private contractors, and staff movement continued to be restricted and unpredictable at several checkpoints, notably those controlling access to East Jerusalem or through the West Bank barrier. In 2013, movement restrictions imposed by the Israeli authorities on the West Bank resulted in the loss of 145 staff days. Additional Agency time and resources were expended to adapt to the restrictions. It remained difficult to deliver Agency services in the area between the West Bank barrier and the 1949 armistice line, in particular in the Barta'a area and in three communities near Qalqilya.

35. Local staff required permits from the Israeli authorities to transit the Erez crossing. During 2013, of a total of 606 applications, 543 permits (89 per cent) were granted. When compared to 2012, the number of permits applied for and granted more than doubled, although the overall percentage of rejected permit applications increased slightly from 9 per cent to 11 per cent.

36. During 2013, the Rafah crossing between Egypt and Gaza was open for public use for a total of 262 of 365 scheduled days. From 1 January 2013 to 30 June 2013 the crossing was closed for 6 days and from 1 July 2013 to 31 December 2013 the crossing was closed for 95 days. In the first half of 2013, following coordination with the Egyptian authorities, UNRWA staff members were allowed to use the Rafah crossing seven days per week. A total of 290 UNRWA staff (100 per cent of submitted requests) were permitted to use the Rafah crossing on duty travel in the first half of the reporting period. During the second half of the reporting period, the United Nations imposed a ban on duty travel for United Nations staff travelling through Rafah, owing to the security situation in the Sinai.

37. During the reporting period, no significant movement restrictions were imposed on UNRWA staff by the Government of Jordan, Lebanon or Palestine. In

the West Bank, Palestine Liberation Organization camp services committees prevented the movement of Agency vehicles on four occasions as part of camp services committee-led protests against changes in the Agency programming.

38. In the Syrian Arab Republic, armed conflict was widespread, as Syrian Government forces and a variety of armed opposition groups battled across the country. The result was a situation of generalized insecurity, which in turn inhibited free movement and humanitarian access. Five staff members were killed as a result of conflict in 2013, all while off-duty, and eight were injured in gunfire or as a result of shelling. Numerous checkpoints were erected, including in and around Damascus. Those set up on travel routes of Agency staff members had an impact on Agency operations, and Agency vehicles have been searched at checkpoints in violation of the immunity of the United Nations. The Agency applied for 65 visas (residency and visit) for international personnel, including renewals; of those, six visas were not granted and no reasons were given for the denials. Residency visas for two international staff were not renewed. It was alleged that they were involved in activities jeopardizing national security. Despite Agency interventions, no documented details of the allegations were provided and the staff had to leave the country.

39. At the end of 2013, 21 staff members were in detention, 13 of whom were believed to be held by the Syrian authorities or other parties in the Syrian Arab Republic, 6 by the Israeli authorities, 1 by the Jordanian authorities and 1 by the Egyptian authorities. Despite Agency requests, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 36/232, in 2013 the Syrian and Egyptian authorities did not provide the Agency with access to its detained staff. Syrian authorities provided reasons for the detention of five UNRWA staff. The Israeli authorities did not provide access to its detained staff and only provided information on the reasons for the detention of one staff member.

40. Credible allegations of mistreatment that may amount to either torture or cruel inhuman and degrading treatment were received by one staff member detained by the de facto authorities in the Gaza Strip and released during the reporting period.

41. As at the end of the reporting period, in addition to the above, five staff members were presumed in detention, missing or kidnapped by unknown parties in the Syrian Arab Republic.

Agency services and premises

42. The Israeli authorities continued to impose transit charges on shipments entering the Gaza Strip, forcing UNRWA to pay $168,415 in 2013. In the view of the Agency, the charge is a direct tax, from which it ought to be exempt under the 1946 Convention. In the view of Israel, the charges were a fee for services and therefore there was no exemption. Since 2010, the Karni and Sofa crossings have remained closed, and all UNRWA container shipments were required to enter through one secondary crossing, Kerem Shalom. As that crossing was not capable of receiving containers, all container shipments had to be palletized at port prior to transport to the Gaza Strip. The Kerem Shalom crossing was closed for imports for 17 days out of 242 scheduled operating days (7 per cent). The closure of the Karni crossing and the requirement to palletize all container shipments contributed to increased expenditure in the form of charges for storage, demurrage, transportation and palletization amounting to some $1.42 million including $580,242 for palletization costs.

43. The Israeli authorities announced in June 2010 that they would liberalize the system by which civilian goods entered Gaza and expand the inflow of materials for civilian projects that were under international supervision. As at the end of 2013, Israeli authorities had approved 103 construction projects, the last 8 of which were approved in March 2013. The Israeli authorities have rejected a total of seven projects since 2010, of which two were rejected in 2013. All of the 37 projects pending approval from the Israeli authorities have taken longer than the two-month period for decision agreed between Israel and the United Nations. The projects pending approval are 1 housing project, 32 schools and 2 health centres, the construction of a solid waste collection and transfer station and the construction of a logistics base.

44. As at the end of the reporting period, UNRWA had been able to complete 73 construction projects (34 in 2013 alone). In total, 10 projects started in 2013, which required the import of 7,055 truckloads of construction materials for projects approved by Israeli authorities.

45. On 13 October 2013, the Israeli authorities abruptly halted coordination and entry of construction material owing to the discovery of a tunnel leading from the Gaza Strip to Israel, and the aftermath of follow-on military operations. Following extensive negotiations and the agreement on 4 December 2013 of an amended framework between Israel and the United Nations, the coordination of construction material, halted on 13 October 2013, restarted on 11 December 2013. Coordination was made conditional upon additional measures for the control of construction material being implemented by UNRWA, which caused extra administrative and construction project costs, including daily monitoring for cement factories by UNRWA international staff members and local staff engineers; the deployment of guards during the night shift; and the escorting of 100 per cent of construction materials from the point of entry from Israel to their destination in the Gaza Strip.

46. Lack of coordination regarding building materials, the enhanced monitoring measures and new Israeli procedures for approving 24 pre-approved projects caused delays in infrastructure project implementation and increased costs; 11 of these projects (schools) were contracted and under implementation. The approval requirement of pre-approved projects has resulted in delays to the implementation of the work under those contracts; 13 of the 24 projects were in the pre-contract stage (tendering or under design).

47. Israeli authorities continued to require standards testing for educational, electronic, medical and other items for official use. UNRWA imports goods for its official use that conform to international standards, and the United Nations considers that the Israeli requirements were contrary to the exemption under the 1946 Convention from prohibitions and restrictions on imports in respect of articles imported by the United Nations for its official use. As at the end of the reporting period, 15 consignments destined for the West Bank were still detained, with the duration of detention ranging between two and four years for each consignment. The total storage costs for consignments delayed during the reporting period exceeded $110,000. While some progress had been achieved in discussions with the Israeli authorities in early 2013, they remained unresolved as at the end of the reporting period.

48. The Operations Support Officer programme continued in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank and Lebanon. The programme played an invaluable role in upholding

United Nations neutrality; in facilitating access for UNRWA staff members, vehicles and goods through checkpoints and, in the occupied Palestinian territory, to areas affected by Israeli military or security operations; in supporting the Agency programmes and initiatives; in monitoring, documenting and intervening at the operational level on protection issues related to the humanitarian situation of the Palestinian population; in the inspection of UNRWA installations; and in providing protection to Palestine refugees, in particular those displaced from the Syrian Arab Republic, and including through legal aid assistance in Lebanon. They are actively engaged in supporting the implementation of reform initiatives in Lebanon. Their core objective is to help deliver improved quality services to the refugees, in an equitable, non-discriminatory and neutral manner. They also systematically identify protection needs and find ways to address them. They are instrumental in mainstreaming protection standards in all of UNRWA services.

49. The 1946 Convention provides that the premises of the United Nations shall be inviolable. Contrary to that obligation, the Israeli military and security forces entered UNRWA premises in the West Bank without authorization or coordination on three occasions. On at least 48 occasions, tear gas canisters, stun grenades and/or plastic-coated metal bullets deployed by the Israeli Security Forces landed in UNRWA compounds. In the Gaza Strip some 94 protests were organized by beneficiaries and other organizations, forcing the closure of UNRWA offices. The protests were mainly against the cuts in assistance.

50. The reconstruction of the Gaza field office warehouse, destroyed on 15 January 2009, was completed and became operational in March 2013.

51. In the West Bank, there were six misuses of UNRWA installations for unauthorized political or other events involving Government of Palestine officials, PLO factions or PLO camp services committee members. In addition, PLO camp services committee members, PLO factions and/or Palestinian Authority municipalities and village councils closed or otherwise interrupted work at an UNRWA installation in 87 separate cases that occurred as part of protests relating to changes in UNRWA programming. In the Gaza Strip, on two occasions the premises of a health centre were accessed without authorization by unknown individuals.

52. In the Syrian Arab Republic, the Agency has sustained conflict-related property losses provisionally estimated at around $3 million since hostilities began in 2011. Since 2011, at least 39 of 180 UNRWA facilities have been either damaged or destroyed, and 21 vehicles have been damaged or stolen. During the reporting period, 15 UNRWA facilities sustained damage as a result of shelling; 12 in Damascus and Rif Dimashq; one in Homs; one in Mzerieb; and one in Aleppo. Damage to UNRWA facilities has made it more difficult for Palestine refugees to obtain essential services.

53. In the Syrian Arab Republic the Agency received several reports in the course of the year of the temporary presence of armed elements in UNRWA facilities. Those reports could not be verified as no safe access to those facilities was possible. During the reporting period, seven UNRWA vehicles were stolen or impounded and have not yet been retrieved.

54. In the Syrian Arab Republic the Agency also lost small quantities of humanitarian aid to armed theft, typically while it was being transported to

Palestinian refugees. Such incidents were infrequent and total losses did not exceed 1 per cent of the quantities of humanitarian assistance distributed.

55. In Jordan, on one occasion a political activity was conducted in a school, despite UNRWA objections and efforts by the Jordanian authorities, who undertook to ensure that such activities did not reoccur. In Lebanon, Palestinian beneficiaries broke into UNRWA premises and attacked and injured UNRWA staff members on three occasions. There were 183 days of closures of different UNRWA installations throughout the year in Lebanon. This was mainly owing to the protests of discontented beneficiaries, but also to civil unrest and armed factional fighting.

Other matters

56. In August 2013, UNRWA agreed with the Palestine Ministry of Finance on new procedures to seek UNRWA valued-added tax exemptions and arrived at an understanding concerning exemption of value-added tax in Gaza. With regard to arrears for value-added tax accrued prior to these arrangements, as at 31 December 2013, the total amount of value-added tax still due to the Agency for services and goods procured for the West Bank and the Gaza Strip was approximately $89.7 million.

57. The Agency was required, as in the past, to pay port fees and other charges to the Syrian authorities, contrary to the 1948 Agreement between the United Nations and the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic. In 2013, fees and charges totalling $70,820 were paid.

58. On 15 February 2012, approximately $74,000 was seized from the Agency HSBC Bank account in Jordan on the basis of an order by the Jordanian Execution Office. Despite numerous requests and protests to the Government before and after the seizure of funds, and interventions by the Commissioner-General and the United Nations Legal Counsel, the funds had not been returned at the end of the reporting period.

59. Despite requests to the Government by the Agency and the United Nations Legal Counsel, a writ of execution was issued by the Executive Bureau in Beirut and resulted in the seizure of funds held by the Government for UNRWA in the sum of $680,000.

60. The Agency faced difficulties in obtaining exemptions from customs and other governmental fees from the Customs Department of the Ministry of Finance of Jordan for importation of vehicles for official use and for importation of goods where there were similar national products available. UNRWA considers these restrictions to be contrary to the Agency's exemption from restrictions on imports under the 1946 Convention and its 1951 bilateral agreement with Jordan. Jordan considers that the charges are fees for services. Since 2012, the Drivers and Vehicles Licensing Department of the Ministry of Finance of Jordan has requested payment of fees for inspection and registration cards for UNRWA official vehicles, which the Agency protested as constituting a direct tax from which it is exempt under the 1946 Convention. Resolution of this issue is ongoing.

61. In relation to current International Chamber of Commerce arbitration proceedings concerning a construction claim for over $2 million in the Syrian Arab Republic, the Agency alleged lack of impartiality and bias on the part of the sole arbitrator. The sole arbitrator had sought enforcement of an arbitral award in the

Lebanese domestic courts against UNRWA. In doing so, the sole arbitrator effectively became a personal claimant against UNRWA. The sole arbitrator resigned prior to a decision being made by the International Chamber of Commerce on the Agency request for removal on the basis of impartiality and bias.

62. UNRWA continued to dispute any liability for payment demanded by the Government of Lebanon in the sum of $136.78 million for electricity consumed by Palestine refugees outside of UNRWA installations in camps in Lebanon.

63. In relation to the internal justice system, the UNRWA Dispute Tribunal, which was established on 1 June 2010, operates on a full-time basis and is comprised of one judge and a part-time ad-litem judge. During the reporting period, the Tribunal issued 38 judgments and 119 orders. As at the end of the reporting period, there were 68 cases pending, of which 64 were filed by area staff. There were also 12 appeals pending before the United Nations Appeals Tribunal.

Legal status of Palestine refugees in the Agency area of operations

64. The legal status of Palestine refugees in Jordan, the Syrian Arab Republic, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip remained substantially the same as that described in the report of the Commissioner-General for 2008.[8]

65. Further to the matters set out in previous reports, following a meeting between the Minister of Labour and the Agency in Lebanon in January 2013, the Minister released a communiqué that clarified that Palestine refugees applying for a work permit are exempt from securing an insurance policy and undertaking the required blood tests, since they are eligible for the full medical and hospitalization benefits provided by UNRWA.

66. Further to the matters set out in previous reports,[9] Palestinian refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic in Jordan continued to face discriminatory restrictions and forcible return. In contrast to other refugees fleeing the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic, Palestine refugees also faced difficulties in accessing courts and civil status/registration processes, such as the issuance of birth certificates, as well as employment and basic services. Some Palestinian refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic continue to be held in a specific facility and face greater restrictions on their movement outside the facility in comparison with Syrians held in equivalent facilities.

E. Financial overview

67. With the exception of 146 international staff posts funded by the General Assembly through the United Nations regular budget, UNRWA operations, projects and emergency appeals are funded by the voluntary contributions of donors.

68. Based on unaudited financial statements, in 2013, the Agency expended $1.1 billion. The largest type of expenditure was $678.9 million under the unrestricted regular budget, accounting for 60.7 per cent of total expenditure. Restricted fund

[8] See A/64/13, paras. 52-55.

[9] Palestinians have been denied access to Jordan since 2012, when the Jordanian authorities made it harder for Palestinian refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic to enter the country, before announcing the policy officially in January 2013.

activities, emergency activities and projects accounted for 4 per cent, 13 per cent and 22.3 per cent, respectively. Inadequate funding forced the Agency to implement a range of austerity measures, including reductions in travel expenditure, suspension of capital expenditure, including information technology, vehicles and equipment replacement and maintenance of buildings with the exception of critical needs requiring prior management approval; and use of UNRWA premises for workshops.

69. In 2013, education remained the largest programme, with an expenditure of $410.7 million, accounting for 60 per cent of the total unrestricted (unearmarked) regular budget expenditure of $678.9 million.

Table 1
General Fund actual expenditure by field of operation, by programme, 2013
(Thousands of United States dollars)

Programme	*Headquarters*		*Gaza*		*Lebanon*		*Syrian Arab Republic*		*Jordan*		*West Bank*		*Total*	
Support services	44 559	89%	21 453	9%	11 329	12%	4 716	11%	9 761	7%	13 721	13%	105 539	16%
Education	2 259	5%	174 725	70%	47 047	49%	33 293	74%	95 320	71%	58 026	55%	410 670	60%
Health	773	1%	37 464	15%	22 817	24%	3 997	9%	23 359	18%	27 000	25%	115 410	17%
Relief and social services	1 020	2%	10 907	4%	8 967	9%	1 664	4%	5 618	4%	5 942	6%	34 118	5%
Infrastructure	1 513	3%	3 977	2%	5 297	6%	854	2%	461	0%	1 018	1%	13 120	2%
Total	**50 124**	**100%**	**248 526**	**100%**	**95 457**	**100%**	**44 524**	**100%**	**134 519**	**100%**	**105 707**	**100%**	**678 857**	**100%**

Figure I
Expenditure by programme, General Fund unrestricted, 2013

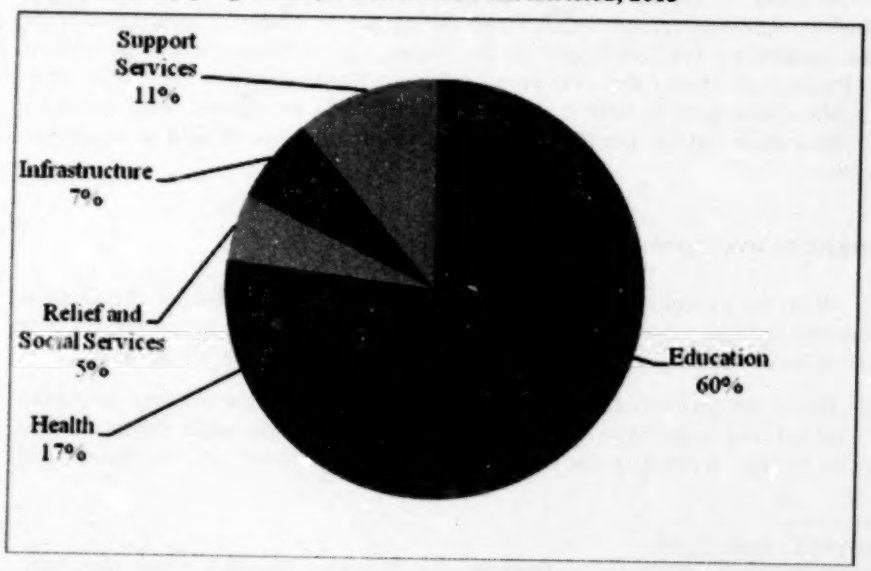
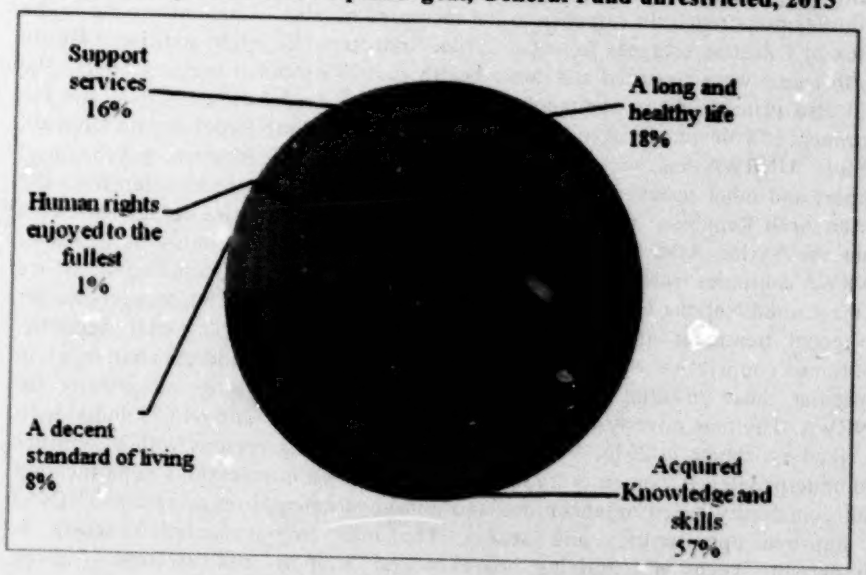


Table 2
General Fund actual expenditure by field of operation and human development goal, 2013
(Thousands of United States dollars)

Programme	*Headquarters*		*Gaza*		*Lebanon*		*Syrian Arab Republic*		*Jordan*		*West Bank*		*Total*	
A long and healthy life	1 650	3%	36 391	14%	27 652	29%	4 644	10%	23 359	17%	27 013	25%	120 709	18%
Acquired knowledge and skills	2 122	5%	170 784	69%	43 199	46%	31 317	70%	89 233	66%	52 123	49%	388 778	57%
A decent standard of living	1 661	3%	17 486	7%	12 446	13%	3 087	8%	10 716	8%	11 230	11%	56 626	8%
Human rights enjoyed to the fullest	132	0%	2 493	1%	383	0%	490	1%	989	1%	723	1%	5 210	1%
Support services	44 559	89%	21 372	9%	11 777	12%	4 986	11%	10 222	8%	14 618	14%	107 534	16%
Total	**50 124**	**100%**	**248 526**	**100%**	**95 457**	**100%**	**44 524**	**100%**	**134 519**	**100%**	**105 707**	**100%**	**678 857**	**100%**

Figure II
Expenditure by human development goal, General Fund unrestricted, 2013


Support services 16%
A long and healthy life 18%
Human rights enjoyed to the fullest 1%
A decent standard of living 8%
Acquired Knowledge and skills 57%

Chapter II
Field priorities

A. Jordan

70. During the reporting period, the reform of the social safety net programme in Jordan included moving from a status-based to a poverty-based approach, which aims to ensure improved targeting and impact of UNRWA services. The family health team approach, e-Health and an appointment system continue to be rolled out in UNRWA health centres. Half of the 24 health centres had applied the family health team approach, and 7 had shifted to the e-Health system by the end of the reporting period. The "leading for the future" training programme for head teachers and assistant head teachers and the "school-based teacher development" programme, were both started in 2013. In addition, the replacement of unsuitable rented premises for schools with purpose-built schools remains a priority. Plans were developed in 2013 to construct a building in Jabal Taj to replace five schools currently in rented facilities. Other priorities include enhancing job opportunities for youth and improving living conditions in camps.

B. Lebanon

71. During the reporting period, the Agency continued to implement reforms in its health programme in Lebanon; 22 of 27 health centres implemented the family health team approach. In response to the increased number of patients owing to the influx of Palestine refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic, eight additional family health teams were recruited and some health centres extended opening hours. The field also prioritized the continued implementation of education reforms, and the enrolment of Palestine refugee children from the Syrian Arab Republic into UNRWA schools. UNRWA has worked closely with UNICEF on education, psychosocial support and other interventions for vulnerable Palestine refugee children from the Syrian Arab Republic. As at 31 December 2013, 7,338 Palestine refugee students from the Syrian Arab Republic were enrolled in UNRWA schools in Lebanon. UNRWA continues working with other United Nations agencies, including the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), to advocate for the equal treatment of all refugees entering from the Syrian Arab Republic. Continued cooperation with other United Nations agencies, to address challenges, in particular those resulting from the Syrian conflict, is an ongoing priority for UNRWA. The new poverty-based approach was introduced, and 64,671 individuals received assistance in 2013. Vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities and underprivileged women, were targeted with tailored interventions in partnership with community-based organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to improve opportunities and access. The interventions included access to microcredit, vocational training, psychosocial support and awareness-raising activities on topics such as health care, human rights and gender-based violence.

C. Syrian Arab Republic

72. The worsening armed conflict across the country, in particular within Rif Dimashq, Aleppo and Dar'a governorates, resulted in the displacement of an

estimated 270,000 Palestine refugees within the Syrian Arab Republic alone. In response, thanks to generous donor support of humanitarian appeals, UNRWA significantly expanded its humanitarian assistance, prioritizing cash, health care, shelter and food assistance. Armed conflict continued to affect UNRWA services in refugee communities throughout the country, adversely affecting school enrolment, humanitarian access, health services and microfinance lending. However, the Agency was able to maintain and adapt operations in most areas to better respond to increasing and evolving needs. Wherever possible, the Agency strove to maintain social and infrastructural development projects, microfinance and support for youth through career counselling and technical and vocational education.

D. West Bank

73. The family health team approach was implemented in 16 health centres and the family and child protection programme, and the gender-based violence referral system was functioning in 18 locations as at 31 December 2013. The education programme provided basic education to 51,707 children in 99 UNRWA schools during the 2012/13 school year. The newly developed teacher toolkit of the human rights conflict resolution and tolerance education programme was introduced at 40 schools; 6,270 students benefited from dyslexia-related services and the remedial education programme targeted an average of 12,000 students per month in Arabic and mathematics. UNRWA also undertook efforts to reform its vocational training programme through the introduction of new courses and specializations and partnerships with private companies to provide technical support and establish apprenticeships. As part of the Agency-wide reform, furthered implementation of the social safety net programme aimed at providing more targeted assistance to abject poor refugees.

E. Gaza Strip

74. Throughout 2013, UNRWA staff conducted over 100,000 family visits as part of its poverty survey, and, as a result of the implementation of the poverty survey, overall food aid beneficiaries increased from 798,540 in January to 813,646 in December 2013. In light of this, a potential suspension or reduction of aid for funding reasons, particularly food aid, would seriously undermine the Agency's poverty policy and lead to popular unrest, as witnessed in April 2013, when the suspension of a small-scale cash assistance programme led to violent protests. UNRWA completed the construction of 30 new school buildings in Gaza during the reporting period, reducing the proportion of schools operating on double shift from 86 per cent in 2012 to 71 per cent. Class size was maintained at 38 students per classroom. Over 230,000 students attended 245 UNRWA schools. That represents a 30 per cent increase from 2000. UNRWA continued to teach a dedicated human rights curriculum in all schools grounded in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and focusing on tolerance and conflict resolution; e-Health expanded from 6 to 11 health centres, and 16 out of UNRWA's 21 health centres applied the family health team approach. Both reform initiatives had a positive impact on doctor-patient contact time. UNRWA also maintained a network of psychosocial counsellors in its schools, relief and social services offices and health centres. Gender-based violence cases are identified and offered counselling and referral

through the UNRWA gender-based violence "one-stop centre" approach, which includes legal information, education on basic legal rights and referral to legal representation if required.[10] In 2013, UNRWA launched the initiative "Gaza Gateway" to strengthen recent graduates' employability and introduce new buyers to Gaza's information and communications technology industry, which is one of the few industries able to grow and export high value services in the context of the blockade. In 2013, among the priorities the Agency identified in Gaza are renewable energy solutions and sustainable access to potable water. In 2013 UNRWA initiated planning for use of solar power in its installations, the construction of desalination facilities and projects to recharge Gaza's aquifer. The Agency also plans to expand recycling to relieve pressure on landfills.

[10] In 2013, case managers addressed almost 1,200 cases of gender-based violence; 400 new cases were referred by health staff and 45 new cases by social workers. Of all cases, 750 were referred to legal counsellors and 32 cases were referred to external partners to address protection and legal matters.

Chapter III

Subprogramme review presented within the framework of the UNRWA human development goals

75. UNRWA continues to follow the framework set out in its medium-term strategy 2010-2015. The strategy provides direction for the Agency on the basis of 15 strategic objectives, each of which contributes to one or more of four human development goals: a long and healthy life; acquired knowledge and skills; a decent standard of living; and human rights enjoyed to the fullest. In 2013, the Agency field offices and headquarters departments worked towards biennium targets set out in field[11] and headquarters implementation plans that are based on the five-year strategic vision of the Agency and a refugee needs assessment conducted by each field office.

A. Goal 1

A long and healthy life

76. The Agency aims to deliver the human development goal of a long and healthy life through interventions by its health programme and the camp improvement and infrastructure programme, in collaboration with host countries and national and international partners where applicable.

77. The Agency delivers primary health care to Palestine refugees through its 138 health centres. Despite health gains, evidenced in significant reductions in maternal, neonatal, infant and child mortality, non-communicable diseases are an increasing health challenge. The increasing prevalence of sedentary lifestyles, smoking and obesity in an ageing refugee population contribute to an increasing disease burden, which is costly to treat and manage. In response to this challenge, UNRWA undertook health reforms, initiated in 2011, including the family health team approach and e-Health. The family health team encompasses a multidisciplinary group of health professionals working together to provide holistic and continuous patient/family-centred health care. By the end of 2013, a total of 63 UNRWA health clinics had implemented the family health team approach, and 55 had adopted e-Health. These reforms have improved patient and provider satisfaction, as well as streamlining the distribution of staff workload, decreasing waiting times and the average number of daily consultations per doctor, and increasing consultation times. Additionally, the holistic and patient/family-driven nature of the family health team approach assists health staff in effectively identifying and responding to cases of gender-based violence. Access to specialized hospital services is often curtailed for Palestine refugees because of political, geographical, status and/or financial reasons. The ongoing conflict and resulting displacement of Palestine refugees in the Syrian Arab Republic have created additional demands for the Agency's health programmes in the Syrian Arab Republic, Lebanon and Jordan. Of the 23 health centres in the Syrian Arab Republic, 9 were not fully operational during the year, and 5 new health centres were established.

[11] Unless otherwise stated, and with the exception of strategic objective 8, all results exclude the Syrian Arab Republic; see also the Syria Crisis Response Progress Report, available at www.unrwa.org.

78. During the reporting period, under its infrastructure and camp improvement programme, nearly 99 per cent of camp shelters were connected to a water network. Almost 88 per cent of refugee shelters are now using recognized connections to public sewerage networks, as compared to 93 per cent in 2012, when informal connections were also included.

Strategic objective 1
To ensure universal access to quality, comprehensive primary health care

		Measurement	
Expected accomplishment	*Indicator of achievement*	*Unit of measure*	*Percentage*
Universal access to quality, comprehensive primary health care	Decrease in the antibiotic prescription rate	Baseline (2012)	25.
		Target (2013)	25.0
		Actual (2013)	24.6

Strategic objective 2
To protect and promote family health

		Measurement	
Expected accomplishment	*Indicator of achievement*	*Unit of measure*	*Percentage*
Sustained protection and promotion of family health	Infant mortality rate in line with host countries	Baseline (2011)	23.0
		Target (2013)	22.0
		Actual (2013)	22.0

Strategic objective 3
To prevent and control diseases

		Measurement	
Expected accomplishment	*Indicators of achievement*	*Unit of measure*	*Percentage*
Improved alignment of communicable disease prevalence with host authorities	(i) Immunization coverage rate against vaccine-preventable diseases maintained	Baseline (2012)	99.5
		Target (2013)	99.1
		Actual (2013)	99.3
	(ii) Percentage of shelters connected to the public water network maintained	Baseline (2012)	99.9
		Target (2013)	100.0
		Actual (2013)	99.9
	(iii) Increase in the percentage of shelters connected to the public sewerage network	Baseline (2012)	93.0
		Target (2013)	94.0
		Actual (2013)	87.0[a]

[a] Figure only includes formal connections.

Outputs

- Provision of 8.7 million outpatient medical consultations to Palestine refugees, of which 167,000 were consultations with specialists for the treatment of acute and chronic diseases
- Over 650,000 health consultations provided in Syria despite ongoing conflict and insecurity

- 66,066 patients were subsidized for hospitalization for secondary or tertiary health care
- Antenatal, post-natal and family planning services, including screening for anaemia and provision of iron and vitamin supplements was provided to approximately 252,000 clients
- Screening for hypertension and diabetes mellitus for those 40 years of age carried out at UNRWA health centres. Care provided to over 164,000 patients suffering from non-communicable diseases
- Infant and child health care provided to more than 154,000 children, including age-appropriate immunization for all registered children below two years of age
- Rehabilitation or replacement of most defective parts of the water supply, sewerage and drainage systems and construction of new networks in priority areas, based on a situation analysis of adequacy of the systems in place
- 13 health centres were designed, five construction and extension designs were reviewed and the construction of a health centre in Lebanon was completed
- 8 operational research studies were conducted in quality management and health services delivery, in collaboration with academic institutions of global health repute and standing

B. Goal 2

Acquired knowledge and skills

79. UNRWA operates 659 elementary and preparatory schools across its five fields of operation, as well as eight secondary schools in Lebanon, providing free basic education for approximately half a million Palestine refugee children. Literacy rates among Palestine refugees compare well with regional and global levels, and there has been gender equity in enrolment since the 1960s. In order to ensure that UNRWA continues to provide quality education, a reform strategy was launched in October 2011. The strategy seeks to transform classroom practices towards enhanced student learning outcomes. Reforms have addressed policy and operations in eight key areas: teacher development and school empowerment; curriculum and student assessment; inclusive education; technical and vocational education and training and youth; administration and governance; strategic planning; research and development; and partnerships, communication and information technology. Key achievements during the reporting period included improvements in planning and reporting, the final endorsement of policies on teacher training, career progression, inclusive education and human rights education. The latter two were grounded in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the World Programme for Human Rights Education, respectively. Programmes and toolkits related to professional development and human rights were disseminated and implemented. Progress was made on the implementation of the UNRWA curriculum framework, which will guide field offices and schools in evaluating the curriculum to ensure alignment with United Nations values and principles and the development of core competences, and on a tool to identify and support children with diverse needs.

Strategic objective 4
To ensure universal access to and coverage of basic education

		Measurement	
Expected accomplishment	*Indicators of achievement*	*Unit of measure*	*Ratio*
Universal access and coverage of basic education	(i) Dropout rate for elementary schools[a]		
	Male	Baseline (2012)	2.64
		Target (2013)	2.16
		Actual (2013)	3.48
	Female	Baseline (2012)	1.70
		Target (2013)	1.16
		Actual (2013)	1.24
	(ii) Dropout rate for preparatory schools[a]		
	Male	Baseline (2012)	6.09
		Target (2013)	6.30
		Actual (2013)	6.44
	Female	Baseline (2012)	4.38
		Target (2013)	4.65
		Actual (2013)	3.30

[a] Cumulative dropout adjusted without Syrian Arab Republic field.

Strategic objective 5
To enhance educational quality and outcomes against set standards

		Measurement	
Expected accomplishment	*Indicator of achievement*	*Unit of measure*	*Percentage*
Improved monitoring of quality of education delivery	Percentage change in the mean score obtained by students on the monitoring learning achievement test, by gender	Baseline (2010)[a]	–
		Target (2013)	2.8
		Actual (2013)	3.0

[a] Baseline year set to 0.

Strategic objective 6
To improve access to educational opportunities for learners with special educational needs

		Measurement	
Expected accomplishment	*Indicator of achievement*	*Unit of measure*	*Percentage*
Improved assessment, referral and mainstreaming of special educational needs students	Proportion of identified special educational needs students receiving support	Baseline (2012)	3.07
		Target (2013)	3.00
		Actual (2013)	3.60

Outputs

- Provided general education to approximately 491,641 eligible Palestine refugee children in approximately 659 UNRWA elementary and preparatory schools (and secondary education in Lebanon)
- Developed and implemented teacher policies and professional development strategies for the teaching workforce of over 13,000 teachers to improve the quality of teaching and learning
- Established a policy framework and diagnostic tools to identify and support children with special needs and those at risk of dropping out
- Undertook 2 qualitative and quantitative research studies to identify and address the key factors impacting quality education
- A total of 10 schools were designed and/or reviewed for new construction and extensions. The design of the first green school of the Agency, the Kuwait City School in Gaza, was also completed

C. Goal 3

A decent standard of living

80. During the reporting period, UNRWA continued to deliver a social safety net comprised of food, cash and specialized services to almost 300,000 Palestine refugees. The relief and social services programme preserved and updated 5,030,049 refugees' records through the refugee registration information system, as well as developing a module within the system to support the Agency's response to the Syrian crisis in the Syrian Arab Republic, Lebanon and Jordan. This enables staff to keep track of Palestine refugees who have moved between UNRWA fields of operations, to verify eligibility and receipt of assistance, significantly improving workflow and the quality of data on refugees affected by the crisis. Reforms were implemented that allowed all five fields to use an accurate and uniform targeting system to select beneficiaries, assuring that the most vulnerable are identified for services. Support continued to be provided to UNRWA fields of operations to rationalize emergency and traditional assistance packages, to improve and tailor targeting systems, support emergency responses and gender-based violence referral, and to emphasize and mainstream gender themes.

81. The UNRWA education programme also contributes to UNRWA human development goal 3 by increasing employability through its technical and vocational training programme. In coordination with all fields, indicators were assessed and reformulated to better measure the relevance, the efficiency and the effectiveness of the UNRWA technical and vocational training programme.

82. UNRWA constructed or rehabilitated the shelters for families living in structurally unsound, unsafe and unhygienic conditions; 1,008 shelters were rehabilitated. Additionally, in the Gaza Strip, under emergency interventions, 9,323 shelters were repaired and/or reconstructed after destruction since 2004. In Naher el-Bared, Lebanon, 737 families were accommodated in the reconstructed shelters during the reporting period. However, the shortage of funding meant that the total remained a small proportion of the over 5,000 shelters estimated to be in need of rehabilitation across all five fields of operation. The programme also included

continuing efforts to improve facilities for Palestine refugees, and during the reporting period UNRWA designed, constructed, rehabilitated or extended health clinics, schools and distribution and training centres across the fields of operation.

Strategic objective 7
To reduce abject poverty

		Measurement	
Expected accomplishment	*Indicator of achievement*	*Unit of measure*	*Percentage*
			All fields of operation
Increased ability of abject poor individuals to meet their basic food needs	Increased percentage of abject poor among beneficiaries of the UNRWA social safety net	Baseline (2012)	61
		Target (2013)	56
		Actual (2013)	56

Outputs

- An average of 285,199 individuals received quarterly food aid and cash subsidy
- UNRWA continues to implement the proxy means test formula to identify Palestine refugees most in need of assistance. Additionally, the Jordan field of operations focused its efforts on assisting 9,000 Palestine refugees who were unable to meet their most basic food needs (abject poor)

Strategic objective 8
To mitigate the immediate effects of emergencies on individuals

		Measurement	
Expected accomplishment	*Indicator of achievement*	*Unit of measure*	*Number*
Reduce impact of family financial crisis	Number of Palestine refugees provided with cash and/or food assistance	Baseline (2012)	798 499
		Target (2013)	667 500
		Actual (2013)	1 323 626

Strategic objective 9
To provide inclusive financial services and access to credit

		Measurement	
Expected accomplishment	*Indicators of achievement*	*Unit of measure*	*Number (in millions of United States dollars)*
Increased provision of financial services	(i) Number of loans disbursed	Baseline (2012)	32 892
		Target (2013)	48 065
		Actual (2013)	26 539
	(ii) Values of loans disbursed	Baseline (2012)	36.43
		Target (2013)	60.98
		Actual (2013)	30.55

Outputs

- The microfinance programme financed 26,539 loans valued at $30.55 million in 2013, with 13,030 loans valued at $18.403 million financed in Palestine, 10,117 loans worth $11.23 million financed in Jordan and just 3,392 loans worth $0.91 million disbursed in the Syrian Arab Republic
- Overall annual outreach to clients declined by 19 per cent, while the value of the portfolio decreased by 16 per cent. This decline was largely a result of the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic, where outreach declined by 57 per cent. There was also a lesser decline in outreach in the West Bank and Jordan, where outreach fell 14 per cent and 4 per cent, respectively. There was a small improvement in outreach in the Gaza Strip of 1.5 per cent
- 16,022 loans were provided to enterprises valued at $19.08 million through the programme's microenterprise credit, microenterprise credit plus, small-scale enterprise, solidarity group lending, women's household credit and youth start-up loan products
- 10,517 consumer and housing loans valued at $11.46 million were provided to support education and health, to build household assets and to enable families to improve their housing through loans for repair, maintenance and construction
- Palestine refugees accounted for 44 per cent of all clients, while informal enterprises accounted for 92 per cent of all enterprises financed
- Loans to women represented 37 per cent of portfolio outreach, and young clients between 18 and 30 years of age accounted for 31 per cent of all borrowers
- While the programme remained completely self-reliant and operationally self-sufficient in Palestine and Jordan, it struggled to remain self-reliant in the Syrian Arab Republic and made a loss of $161,927, despite donor subventions of $97,542 during the period
- The 2013 targets were not achieved because of intensifying economic crisis and insecurity in the Syrian Arab Republic, slowdown of outreach in the West Bank and constraints regarding the ability of the Agency to engage with the legal system in Gaza. This resulted in the number of loans falling by 6,353 and the value being reduced by $5.88 million between 2012 and 2013

Strategic objective 10
To improve employability

		Measurement	
Expected accomplishment	*Indicators of achievement*	*Unit of measure*	*Percentage*
Improved market responsiveness of educational science facilities/ vocational training centres	(i) Male employment rates for graduates within 12 months of graduation	Baseline (2012)	84.1
		Target (2013)	80.0
		Actual (2013)	83.0
	(ii) Female employment rates for graduates within 12 months of graduation	Baseline (2012)	72.7
		Target (2013)	77.0
		Actual (2013)	76.0

Outputs

- Completion of the technical and vocational training assessment, which was conducted during 2011-2013 with all the fields of operation
- Developed the new technical and vocational training strategy under the programme "Enhancement of UNRWA TVET and PCG [Placement and Career Guidance] Systems"
- Provided training in technical and vocational skills to almost 7,000 students, of whom 40 per cent are women

Strategic objective 11
To improve the urban environment through sustainable camp development and upgrading of substandard infrastructure and accommodations

Expected accomplishment	*Indicator of achievement*	*Measurement*	
		Unit of measure	*Number*
Sustained camp development and upgraded substandard infrastructure and accommodation	Increase in the number of refugee families living in substandard shelters which have improved living conditions (excluding emergency shelters in the Gaza Strip)	Baseline (2012)	324
		Target (2013)	2 250
		Actual (2013)	1 044

Outputs

- Urban Camp Profile Project, documenting and consolidating comprehensive information of more than 500 quantitative and qualitative data sets (for example, analytical static maps, descriptive texts, graphs, dynamic maps using Geographic Information Systems, descriptive numbers, etc.) regarding Palestine refugee camps in Lebanon, Jordan, Gaza and the West Bank was finalized
- Development work on two data management systems (the Shelter Data Management System and the Facility Data Management System) was initiated and finalized; they are now ready for deployment

D. Goal 4

Human rights enjoyed to the fullest

83. Just and equitable human development and effective humanitarian action require respect for human rights. The achievement of the Agency's first three human development goals, therefore, relies on the fourth: ensuring that human rights are enjoyed to the fullest. The role of the Agency in protection is an integral part of its mandate to meet Palestine refugee needs in education, health, relief and social services, microfinance and adequate living conditions, including shelter, as well as the rights set down in international legal instruments, and is pursued in cooperation with national authorities, other United Nations agencies, United Nations human rights mechanisms and non-governmental organizations.

84. UNRWA protection work has internal and external dimensions. Internally, UNRWA promotes protection through programming and service delivery. Externally,

it engages in the monitoring and reporting of Palestine refugee conditions and undertakes appropriate interventions. The Commissioner-General highlights the need for a just and durable solution to the conflict, which respects the right of the Palestine refugees.

85. The provision of essential services by UNRWA, and ensuring access under different circumstances, including conflict, is integral to the enjoyment of rights of the Palestine refugees. Direct and indirect engagement with other actors helps to create and consolidate an environment and practices in which rights are respected. Those rights include economic and social rights associated with the UNRWA core areas of service delivery, such as education, as well as civil and political rights, such as the right to life. In addition, as a major provider of public services, UNRWA seeks to ensure that the manner in which it provides them ensures respect for the rights, dignity and safety of its beneficiaries. It does this by, for example, mainstreaming minimum protection standards in all programmes across all fields of operation, acting to eliminate violence in schools, taking steps to prevent gender-based violence and abuse of children and promoting knowledge of individual rights through long-term human rights and tolerance programming in its schools. Monitoring and reporting mechanisms help in the effective implementation of protection activities.

Strategic objective 12
To ensure service delivery meets the protection needs of beneficiaries, including vulnerable groups

		Measurement[a]	
Expected accomplishment	*Indicators of achievement*	*Unit of measure*	*Percentage*
Improved conformity of service delivery to international standards, particularly protection standards	(i) Degree of compliance with protection standards	Baseline (2012)	47.3
		Target (2013)	50.0
		Actual (2013)	46.6
	(ii) The percentage of education staff who successfully complete the human rights, conflict resolution and tolerance training programme	Baseline (2012)	0.0
		Target (2013)	20.0
		Actual (2013)	9.5

[a] Gaza field office not included.

Strategic objective 13
To safeguard and advance the rights of Palestine refugees by promoting respect for human rights, international humanitarian law and international refugee law

		Measurement[a]	
Expected accomplishment	*Indicator of achievement*	*Unit of measure*	*Percentage*
Improved programmes and policies regarding protection	Percentage of protection issues eliciting positive responses from authorities	Baseline (2012)	33.0
		Target (2013)	35.0
		Actual (2013)	66.6

[a] Gaza field office not included.

Outputs

- UNRWA developed a multisectoral approach to address gender-based violence, and in all fields of operation referral systems were developed to increase survivors' access to services
- 715 staff received basic training; 561 received in-depth training; and 586 received specialized training with the number of survivors detected approximately 2,360
- UNRWA provided input regarding Palestine refugees to 13 United Nations reports that address human rights based on the Agency framework for engaging with the international human rights system

Strategic objective 14
To strengthen refugee capacity to formulate and implement sustainable social services in their communities

		Measurement	
Expected accomplishment	*Indicator of achievement*	*Unit of measure*	*Percentage*
Refugee capacity to formulate and implement sustainable social services in their communities	Percentage of community-based organizations improving their level of performance in financial management, service delivery and governance	Baseline (2012)	76.4
		Target (2013)	71.0
		Actual (2013)	80.0

Output

- 62 community-based organizations in Gaza, Jordan, Lebanon and the West Bank received training on governance and financial management, in line with their organizational development priorities

Strategic objective 15
To ensure Palestine refugee registration and eligibility for UNRWA services are carried out in accordance with relevant international standards

		Measurement	
Expected accomplishment	*Indicator of achievement*	*Unit of measure*	*Percentage*
Improved access to registration	Percentage of new applicants meeting UNRWA standards	Baseline (2012)	99
		Target (2013)	99
		Actual (2013)	99

Output

- Implementation of the refugee registration information system has facilitated staffs' application of the UNRWA Consolidated Eligibility and Registration Instructions and significantly improved HQ's ability to monitor transactions

Endnote

86. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East was established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 302 (IV) of

December 1949. The Agency is a subsidiary body of the Assembly and became operational on 1 May 1950, responding to the needs of about 750,000 Palestine refugees. It is one of the largest United Nations programmes, with a population of 5,030,049 registered Palestine refugees under its mandate as at the end of 2013, and around 30,000 staff. Palestine refugees are defined as "persons whose normal place of residence was Palestine during the period of 1 June 1946 to 15 May 1948, and who lost both home and means of livelihood as a result of the 1948 conflict" and include descendants through the male line.

87. The mission of the Agency is to assist Palestine refugees in achieving their full potential in human development until a durable and just solution is found to the refugee issue. The Agency fulfils its humanitarian and human development mandate by providing protection and essential services to Palestine refugees in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic. Its services include basic (and in Lebanon, secondary) education, comprehensive primary health care, emergency relief, social interventions, microfinance, shelter and infrastructural support.

14-02919 (E) 120914

Please recycle